

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A single-use device for sampling and recovering a target, said device comprising a sterile swab and a handle attached to said swab, wherein said swab is a gelatine-based sponge, and wherein said device is contained in a sealed package.

2-87. (Cancelled)

88. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein the gelatine-based sponge has a water absorption capacity of at least 30 g/g as determined by USP method "Absorbable Gelatine Sponge: Water Absorption".

89-90. (Cancelled)

91. (Currently amended) A kit comprising:

i) a swab and a handle attached to said swab, wherein said swab is a gelatine-based sponge; and

ii) ~~an agent selected from the group consisting of a neutral diluent, an anti-microbial agent, a disinfecting agent, and a dispersion agent~~ selected from the group consisting of saline, saline peptone, buffered saline peptone, Ringer solution and an organic and inorganic buffer.

92. (Cancelled)

93. (Currently amended) A method for collecting a target from a collection medium comprising:

i) providing a device according to claim 1; ~~swab comprising gelatine; and~~

ii) making contact between the swab of the device according to claim 1 and the target to transfer said target from the collection medium to the swab of the device; and

iii) transferring said target from the swab of said device to a transfer medium to thereby recover said target from said collection medium.

94. (Cancelled)

95. (Withdrawn) A method for sampling an area for a target comprising:

i) swiping the surface of the area with a first gelatine-based sponge pre-wetted with a neutral diluent or dispersing agent; followed by

ii) swiping said surface with a dry second gelatine-based sponge; and

iii) transferring said target from said first and second sponges to a transfer medium.

thereby recovering the target from said surface.

96. (Cancelled)

97. (Currently amended) A method of lowering the amount of a target in a sample area comprising:

(i) providing a device according to claim 1,

(ii) making contact between the a swab of the device according to claim 1 comprising gelatine and at least a portion of said sample area, so that an amount of the target adheres to the swab of the device, and

(iii) transferring the adhered target from the swab of said device to a transfer medium.

98. (Cancelled)

99. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of claims 93, ~~to~~ 95 and ~~or~~ 97, wherein the target is selected from the group consisting of a virus, a microorganism, a mammalian cell and an organic molecule.

100. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 99, wherein the organic molecule is selected from the group consisting of a nucleotide, a nucleic acid, a protein and a detergent.

101. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of claims 93, 95 and 97 wherein said transferring step includes digestion of said gelatine swab.

102. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of claims 93, 95 and 97 wherein said transferring step includes washing said target from the gelatine swab.

103. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 101, wherein the digestion comprises addition of an agent selected from the group consisting of an enzyme, a mineral acid, a carboxylic acid, a base and combinations thereof.

104. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 101, further comprising extraction of the target by membrane filtration.

105-117. (Cancelled)

118. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 99, wherein the micro-organism is selected from the group consisting of bacteria, bacterial spores, archea, yeast and fungi.

119. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 99, wherein the mammalian cell is a cell from blood plasma.

120. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 119, wherein the mammalian cell is selected from the group consisting of leukocytes, erythrocytes and thrombocytes.

121-138. (Cancelled)

139. (Currently amended) The device method according to claim 1-138, wherein said handle support comprises a material selected from the group consisting of wood, natural or synthetic polymeric material, plastics, and rubber materials.

140. (Cancelled)

141. (Withdrawn) A method for sampling an area for a target comprising:

i) a wet-sampling step comprising swiping the surface of the area with the gelatine-based sponge of a first device according to claim 1, wherein said gelatine-based sponge is pre-wetted;

ii) followed by a dry-sampling step comprising swiping said surface with the gelatine-based sponge of a second device according to claim 1,

iii) transferring target collected by said wet-sampling and dry-sampling steps to a transfer medium,

thereby recovering the target from said surface.

142-157. (canceled)

158. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 141, wherein said handle comprises a material selected from the group consisting of wood, natural or synthetic polymeric material, plastics, and rubber materials.

159. (Cancelled)

160. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of claims 93 and 97 ~~93, 94, 97, and 144~~ wherein said swab is pre-wetted.

161-163. (Cancelled)

164. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of claims 93, 95 and 97, wherein said target comprises cells and wherein said method further comprises culturing cells collected on the swab in a growth medium.